

Qualitative Elements of Text Complexity Rubric for Informational Texts

High	Middle	Low	
Levels of Purpose What will the reader gain from reading this text?			
Purpose: subtle, implied, difficult to determine	Purpose: implied, but fairly easy to infer (could be based on context or source	Purpose: Explicitly stated or obvious	
Structure How is the text designed to support the reader in accessing the purpose?			
Text structures (i.e., how information is organized in a text): highly complex, not explicit; patterns of text change throughout the text	Text structures (i.e., how information is organized in a text): complex, largely explicit; usually sequential; patterns of text are mostly consistent with the type of text	Text structures (i.e., how information is organized in a text): clear structure; sequential; patterns of text are consistent throughout the text	
Text features (i.e., headings, titles, index, etc.): if used, are essential in understanding content	Text features: If used, greatly enhance the understanding of content	Text features: if used, help the reader navigate and understand content but are not essential	
Use of graphics: sophisticated graphics, essential to understanding the text, may also provide information not otherwise conveyed in the text	Use of graphics: mix of sophisticated and simple graphics, may occasionally be essential to understanding the text	Use of graphics: use of simple graphics, unnecessary to understand the text	
Language Conventionality and Clarity How does language effect accessibility?			
Meaning: dense and complex; may be abstract, ironic, and/or figurative; language may be purposefully ambiguous or misleading	Meaning: somewhat complex; may occasionally be abstract, ironic, and/or figurative, but usually comprehensible	Meaning: explicit, literal, straight- forward, easy to understand	
Register: generally unfamiliar, archaic, subject- specific, or overly academic	Register: occasionally unfamiliar, archaic, subject- specific, or overly academic, but predominately familiar	Register: contemporary, familiar, conversational	
Knowledge Demands What does the student need to know to access the text?			
Subject Matter Knowledge: requires extensive, perhaps specialized or even theoretical subject-specific knowledge	Subject Matter Knowledge: requires moderate levels of subject-specific knowledge; some theoretical knowledge may enhance understanding	Subject Matter Knowledge: requires only every day, practical knowledge	
Intertextuality: many references/allusions to other texts	Intertextuality: some references/allusions to other texts	Intertextuality: no references/allusions to other texts	

If a text is rated all or mostly "high," or all or mostly "low," please consider if a grade level adjustment should be made.







Quantitative Elements of Text Complexity

Text Complexity Grade Bands	Suggested Lexile Range
K-1	100L – 500L*
2-3	450L – 790L
4-5	770L – 980L
6-8	955L – 1155L
9-10	1080L – 1305L
11-12	1215L – 1355L

Reader and Task Considerations

Thinking Skills

- 1. Does the reader possess the necessary attention to read and comprehend this specific text?
- 2. Will the reader be able to remember and make connections among the various details presented in this specific text?
- 3. Does the reader possess the necessary **critical/analytic thinking skills** to understand the relationships between the main idea, purpose, and/or theme of the text and the various details used to support that main idea, purpose, and/or theme?

Reading Skills

- 1. Does the reader possess the necessary **inferencing skills** to "read between the lines" and make connections among elements that may not be explicit in this specific text?
- 2. Does the reader possess the necessary **questioning skills** to challenge the ideas being presented in this text and consider those ideas from multiple points of view?
- 3. Does the reader possess the necessary comprehension strategies to manage the material in this specific text?

Motivation and Engagement with Task and Text

- 1. Will the reader **understand the purpose**—which might shift over the course of the reading experience—for reading this specific text (i.e., skimming, studying to retain content, close reading for analysis, etc.)?
- 2. Will the reader be interested in the content of this specific text?

Prior Knowledge and Experience

- 1. Are there any **explicit connections** that can be made between what content the reader will encounter in this specific text and other learning that may occur in this or another class?
- 2. Does the reader possess adequate **prior knowledge** and/or experience regarding the vocabulary used within this specific text to manage the material that is presented?
- 3. Does the reader possess adequate **knowledge of and/or experience** with the genre of this specific text to manage the material that is presented?

Content and/or Theme Concerns

- 1. Are there any **potentially concerning elements** of content or theme that might contribute to students, teachers, administrators, and/or parents feeling uncomfortable with reading this specific text?
- 2. Does the reader possess the maturity to respond appropriately to any potentially concerning elements of content or theme?
- 3. Is there anything in the material that is in opposition to state law or Board rule?

